

Foster Parents and Caregivers

Changing Lives One Child at a Time

May 2008



May is National Foster Care Month – Washington Celebrates May 6, 2008

Cheryl Stephani, Children's Administration Assistant Secretary and the staff at Children's Administration would like to thank all foster parents and relative caregivers for their dedication and commitment to the children in their care.

Statewide Quarterly Consultation Session

The next statewide quarterly consultation session is April 23, 2008 at Casey Family Services Field Office, 1123 23rd Ave, Seattle, WA 98122 (206) 322-6711 1:00 to 4:00. Contact your regional foster parent representatives for more information.

"Foster Parenting – You Can Too"

Foster Parenting – You Can Too is the new slogan our foster parent recruitment and retention contractors across the state will be using starting April 1. Children's Administration and the statewide recruitment and retention contractors worked together over the past several months with expert consultants from AdoptUsKids to find better ways of recruiting and keeping quality foster families. We used research to find where and how to reach potential foster families. We asked the DSHS Office of Publications to help design a new slogan and logo based on the demographics, input from the contractors, staff and caregivers. Over 1000 foster parents, relative caregivers, private agency staff and CA staff responded to an on-line survey to select the slogan and logo. The design is bright, bold, upbeat and designed to compel people to take the next step toward becoming a foster parent. Learn more about it and find out how you can be part of the campaign by reading, "Washington is Working to Recruit More Foster Parents Like You, You Can Too..." at: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>.

Foster Care to 21 – Support for Youth! Support for Foster Parents!

Do you have a foster youth in your care that is about to graduate from high school and wants to stay in foster care while they attend college or a vocational program?

Caregivers of youth accepted into the program will continue to receive the basic foster care rate to assist youth in achieving these goals. For additional information, please contact the FC to 21 Program Manager, Jim Pritchard at (360) 902-8487 prji300@dshs.wa.gov or the youth assigned social worker.

Good News for 7th and 8th Grade Students – To realize their college dreams

The College Bound Scholarship is a financial aid program for students who are eligible to participate in the free and reduced-price lunch program. It is designed to inspire students to begin making their college and career plans without about the cost of attending college.

Eligible students sign a pledge in the 7th and 8th grade promising to graduate from high school, maintain a 2.0 GPA, and be good citizens. In exchange, the state of Washington will pay for their college tuition and books – for up to four years of until the student earns a bachelor's degree.

For more information please contact College Bound staff at 1-888-352-0747 or by e-mail at collegebound@hecb.wa.gov.

Important Resources and Numbers

Important numbers to know when you take care of children in out of home care.

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868.

On-Going and Crisis Supports for foster parents

Under contracts with the state, three private agencies are working to build supports for you within the foster care community. Supports include hubs, support groups and matching new foster parents with veteran foster parents. To get connected:

- If you live in eastern Washington, the Olympic Peninsula down through Pacific County or from Thurston County to Clark County, call 1-888-794-1794.
- If you live in King County, call 206-605-0664 and in any county from Snohomish County north, call 360-510-7601 or 360-863-6530.
- If you live in Pierce or Kitsap counties, call 253-473-9252.
- If you live in Renton Region 4 CARE Counseling, Assistance, Relief and Education 1-888-263-3457 or www.friendsofyouth.org.

Family Help Line: 1-800-932-HOPE or www.parenttrust.org. The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington State. Last year, the Family Help Line received over 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: **Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team (FIRST)** 1-253-219-6782. Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868.

Mental Health Crisis Line Information: The crisis line telephone number for your county or region is available on the DSHS Mental Health Division website at: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/mentalhealth/crisis.shtml>.

General foster parent information for the state of Washington

FPAWS: Foster Parent Association of Washington State, 1-800-391-CARE (2273) or www.fpaws.org. FPAWS is seeking new members and supporting foster parents in many ways, including referrals to local associations.

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: **Foster Care Resource Network**, 1-253-473-9252. Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

Resource Information Available Statewide

Get connected to information on resources in your area by calling 211 – a toll free number.

Children's Administration Foster Parent Website: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

Children's Administration Foster Parent Training Website – Trainings are open to all licensed foster parents, licensed relative caregivers and unlicensed caregivers. For information about foster parent and caregiver training, check out: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

Children's Administration Foster Care Listserv

For updated information on resources for the work you do in caring for children, join the 400 people who have subscribed to the Listserv at: <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1>

Family Planning Services are designed to help avoid unwanted or mistimed pregnancy and are available through your local Community Service Office (CSO). Each CSO has a full time Family Planning Nurse to help provide services to Medicaid eligible clients. There is also a Family Planning hotline number 1-800-770-4334.